

27—10.41 (161A) Appropriations. The department of agriculture and land stewardship, division of soil conservation, has received appropriations for conservation cost sharing since 1973 and appropriations to fund certain incentive programs for soil erosion control since 1979. Funds are appropriated each year by the general assembly.

The division has four years to encumber or obligate these funds before they revert to the state's general fund. This rule addresses the distribution of these appropriations among the incentive programs for soil erosion control established by the division in accordance with the authorities extended in Iowa Code chapter 161A. The rule is also consistent with the restrictions imposed by language of the appropriations bills.

10.41(1) Voluntary program. Ninety percent of the appropriation is to be used for cost sharing to provide state funding of not more than 50 percent of the approved cost of permanent soil and water conservation practices or for incentive payments to encourage management practices to control soil erosion on land that is now row-cropped.

Up to 30 percent of a district's original and supplemental allocation may be used for the establishment of practices listed in subrules 10.82(1) and 10.82(2).

The commissioners of a district may allocate voluntary program funds for the restoration of permanent soil and water conservation practices which are damaged or destroyed because of a disaster emergency. Funds may be used for construction, reconstruction, installation, or repair of projects. The commissioners must determine that funds are necessary to restore permanent practices to prevent erosion in excess of applicable soil loss limits caused by the disaster emergency. Funds cannot be used unless a state of disaster emergency pursuant to a proclamation as provided in Iowa Code section 29C.6 has been declared. Funds can be used only if federal or state disaster emergency funds are not adequate. Funds do not have to be allocated on a cost-share basis. Districts are required to report to the division regarding restoration projects and funds allocated for projects.

10.41(2) Publicly owned lakes. For the approved cost of permanent soil conservation practices on watersheds above publicly owned lakes, a minimum of 5 percent of the amount appropriated is to be set aside for cost sharing at a rate not to exceed 75 percent.

10.41(3) Mandatory program. A maximum of 5 percent of the appropriation shall be set aside for cost sharing with landowners or farm operators who are required to install soil erosion control practices as a result of an administrative order from the district to abate complaints filed under Iowa Code section 161A.47.

10.41(4) Special watershed projects. Iowa Code section 161A.7 permits cost sharing up to 60 percent of the cost of a project including five or more contiguous farm units which have at least 500 or more acres of farmland and which constitute at least 75 percent of the agricultural land lying within a watershed or subwatershed, where the owners jointly agree to a watershed conservation plan in conjunction with their respective farm unit soil conservation plan.

10.41(5) Summer construction incentives. Funds are available for the planting of a conservation cover crop in place of cropland during the growing season to extend the construction season for the purpose of the installation of conservation practices. This practice shall be applied using the conservation crop rotation standard. Summer construction incentives are only available in conjunction with state-funded conservation practices.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 161A; 1994 Iowa Acts, chapter 1198, section 1, subsection 4, paragraphs "b," "c," and "d"; 1995 Iowa Acts, chapter 216, section 1, subsection 4, paragraphs "b," "c," and "d"; 1996 Iowa Acts, chapter 1214, section 1, subsection 4, paragraphs "b," "c," and "d"; and 1997 Iowa Acts, House File 708, section 1, subsection 4, paragraphs "b," "c," and "d."